

## **TROOP 58**

### **ADVANCEMENT GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES**

Scouting offers a fun and challenging program in the great outdoors. Scouts have fun with their friends at meetings and on trips, and have a blast doing some awesome outdoor activities like climbing, rafting, caving, backpacking, canoeing and more. Scouts are learning to be responsible for themselves and for others. They are learning how to plan, lead and organize an activity or trip. They are learning how to teach others. They are learning how to serve others and their community. They are learning leadership skills and have lots of opportunities to try their hand at leading others. Scouting offers these opportunities for personal growth and confidence building like no other program.

Advancement in scouting is a by-product of being an active scout. An active scout that attends Tuesday meetings and trips will learn new scouting skills and can complete requirements for rank advancement. Some scouts attend every activity and advance more quickly. Some scouts attend sporadically due to school, sports, or family activities and will advance more slowly. Either way is great. There is no deadline for advancement (other than reaching age 18) or penalty for missing meetings or trips. Scouts who play a sport during a season can pick up where they left off when they return.

#### **Advancement in the scouting program has four basic parts:**

1. Learning core scouting skills
2. Earning Merit Badges
3. Serving in leadership positions
4. Serving our community

A scout can advance through seven ranks including Scout, Tenderfoot, Second Class, First Class, Star, Life and Eagle. Scouts and parents should familiarize themselves with the advancement requirements by closely reading the Scout Handbook.

#### **Advancement can be thought of as a three-legged stool:**

1. **Scout:** The scout takes responsibility for knowing where they are and what they need to do in order to advance.
2. **Troop:** The troop will provide plenty of opportunities throughout the year to learn and sign off skills, service and leadership opportunities, or take a Merit Badge class.
3. **Parents:** The parents should support the scout by encouraging attendance and encouraging, as needed, their scout to take advantage of opportunities to learn and pass off skills.

#### **Rank Advancement for New Scouts:**

The first four ranks (Scout rank through First Class rank) require that a scout learn basic scouting skills including outdoor camping skills, first aid and rescue skills, citizenship, knots and lashings, map and compass, physical fitness, personal safety and responsibility,

cooking and scouting principles. These skills give the scout a core knowledge of the scouting program and will help them enjoy the outdoor program.

**Advancement Procedures:**

1. A Scout in Troop 58 is responsible at all times for their own advancement. Parents should encourage participation at meetings and trips.
2. Scouts advance at a different pace based on meetings and trips attended and interest in learning scouting skills.
3. Each Scout should bring their Scout Handbook, pen/pencil, and a small notebook to every meeting.
4. Rank skills will be taught by older, experienced scouts.
5. To pass off a rank skill, the teaching and mastery of the skills must be confirmed by a Patrol Advisor/Assistant Scoutmaster (ASM) or older scout. Every patrol has 1-2 Patrol Advisor/ASM who are available to review advancement.
6. All skills passed off will be initialed and dated by the Patrol Advisor/ASM or older scouts in the Scout Handbook.
7. Scouts are responsible for showing their signed Scout Handbooks to an Advancement representative for recording into ScoutBook (SB), the troop advancement tracking program. An emailed photograph is also acceptable. Be reminded that regularly turning in their SH will assure that their advancement progress is noted in the official record of ScoutBook (SB).
8. When a scout has completed all requirements for their next rank, they will meet with the Scoutmaster (SM) for a Scoutmaster Conference (SMC).
9. The Scoutmaster will report to the Advancement Chair that a scout is ready for their Board of Review (BOR).
10. The Scout Handbook is the scout's record of what has been passed off and what they need to learn. Parents and scouts can look in their SH at any time to see where they are and what is needed to advance. Parents are welcome to contact the SM/Patrol Advisor at any time, but are encouraged to allow their scout to take the initiative independently.

**School Year Troop Programming:** Troop 58 intends to teach the entire scouting skill program during a school year. All skills are taught by older, higher ranked scouts that have mastered these skills. Beginning in September, an active scout that attends most meetings and trips can advance to the rank of First Class by June.

**Missed Meetings or Skill Instruction Needed:** A scout that misses a meeting or trip when certain skills were taught, or a scout that needs to learn skills that will not be taught until later in the year should do the following in this order:

1. Talk to their Patrol Leader to arrange a time to be taught. All skills are taught by older scouts that have reached First Class rank. Teaching can occur from 6:00-6:30 before troop meetings, during meeting, on trips, or at another convenient time

- arranged ahead of time, assuring 2-deep adult leadership. The instruction and mastery of the skill must be confirmed by Patrol Advisor/ASM.
2. If the Patrol Leader is not helpful, the scout should talk to their Patrol Advisor/ASM assigned to their patrol. They will work with the PL and scout to arrange a time for instruction. The Patrol Advisor/ASM must confirm all teaching and mastery of skills.
  3. If the Patrol Leader and Patrol Advisor/ASM are not helpful, a scout should talk with the Scoutmaster.

### **Rank Advancement for Star, Life and Eagle:**

Once a scout is working towards reaching the rank of Star, Life and Eagle, they are expected to 1) serve in a Position of Responsibility, 2) earn service hours, and 3) earn Merit Badges.

1. **Position of Responsibility (POR):** To advance, a scout must serve in a Position of Responsibility. These range from Patrol Leader, Historian, Librarian, Quartermaster, Den Chief, Instructor, Troop Guide and Senior Patrol Leader. One must actively serve in this role for the period required for the next rank. Carrying a Scoutmaster-assigned leadership project to help the troop is another way to complete this requirement.
2. **Service Hours:** A higher ranked scout must also serve their community. A scout can earn service hours for a rank by working on another scout's Eagle Project. They may also earn hours by serving another charity or church or community service event.
  - a. **Service Hour Reporting:** To report service hours, a scout should print and complete the Service Hour Form from the troop website. A note signed by the charity or leader of the event that briefly describes the event, the date, and the number of hours served is an acceptable alternative. A scout that serves on an Eagle Project must bring a Service Hour Form signed by the Eagle candidate with the hours worked. Alternately, the scout whose project it is may submit for all working that day's event. All service hours reported may be turned in directly to an Advancement representative either in person or via email.
3. **Earning Merit Badges (MB):** The higher ranks also require that a scout earn Merit Badges. Some Merit Badges offer scouts a chance to learn a lot about a particular core scouting subject like First Aid, Camping, Swimming, Lifesaving, Emergency Preparedness or Citizenship. Other MB are more focused on hobbies or interests like Energy, Pet Care, Wood Carving, Pioneering, Dentistry, Basket Weaving, Geology, Indian Lore, Canoeing, Climbing, Archery, Art, Shotgun or Rifle, Wilderness Survival, Golf, Athletics, Water Sports, and many more. Complete information about the BSA Merit Badge process can be found at <https://www.scouting.org/programs/scouts-bsa/advancement-and-awards/merit-badges/>.

4. For the rank of Eagle, a scout must have earned 21 Merit Badges. There are 13 required MB and several hundred others to choose from. Each rank above First Class requires a certain number of Eagle required MB's and optional MB's. These are listed in the Scout Handbook and specific requirements and worksheets can be found at [www.meritbadge.org](http://www.meritbadge.org). A complete list of merit badges can be found at [www.scouting.org/meritbadges](http://www.scouting.org/meritbadges).

**Merit Badges can be earned in the following manner:**

1. A scout interested in earning a new MB should reach out to the Troop MB Coordinator for a blue card. Merit Badges are started and recorded using a blue card that has all pertinent information about the scout, the troop, the counselor, etc. After getting a blue card, a scout should then connect with the Scoutmaster for approval and get a signature on their blue card. The Troop MB Coordinator will also put the scout in contact with a MB Counselor. It is the scout's responsibility to contact that counselor and ask if the registered MB counselor might be offering a class or is willing to work independently with the scout (always with a second registered leader or parent present). When a MB is completed, the blue card is turned in to the MB Coordinator and will eventually be presented to Mecklenburg Council as evidence of completion. A second section of the blue card is given to the scout at COH along with their MB patch. It is recommended that a scout keep all of their blue cards for their own record. Blue cards for merit badges that have been started, but are not complete, are kept by the MB Coordinator. These are referred to as "partials." Some merit badges may remain as partials for a year or more.
2. Camp Daniel Boone-The most popular way is to attend summer scout camp. During a fun and productive week at camp, a scout can come home with 4-6 MB's. Recording of these MB is done at the troop level.
3. Hornet's Nest Council offered MB classes- Our Council offers a variety of MB courses over the year. Some are at Belk Scout Camp, some at Camp Grimes, others in various venues.
4. Local MB Weekends -A wide range of MB are offered at local organizations such as Discovery Place, CPCC, etc.
5. The troop will offer MBs throughout the year. Sometimes they are only offered to a select group of older scouts and other times they are open to all.
6. Scouts should attempt to take the majority of their MB classes in-person. If an in-person MB opportunity is not possible due to lack of a MB Counselor in the Troop/District/Council, then approval may be given by the SM to take an online MB course offering.
7. If a parent or other non-scouting adult wishes to teach a MB, they must first register with BSA, complete Youth Protection Training and complete a MB Counselor application form, all of which must be turned in to the troop MB Counselor Coordinator.
8. If a parent who is a MB Counselor wishes to teach a MB, the MB must be opened up to allow other scouts to also take the MB. The troop will not allow a parent to only teach his/her child. There is great benefit to having scouts take

MB classes together. One of the eight methods of scouting is interaction with adults. We want to encourage our youth to interact with other strong positive and encouraging adult role models. It also offers our scouts the opportunity to be held accountable by another adult who is not their parent.

**Rank Advancement and Boards of Review:**

Once a scout has completed all requirements for their next rank, completed a Scout Master Conference **AND** those requirements have been entered into the troop advancement tracking program (ScoutBook), they will be notified that they are eligible to advance.

An eligible scout can advance at any time a BOR is offered, provided that the steps above have been followed. The earned rank patch will be awarded at our closing circle on the night of the BOR. The scout will be formally recognized as earning that rank at the next Court of Honor.

**For a Scoutmaster Conference (SMC) or Board of Review (BOR)**, a scout must appear in full uniform- scout shirt, pants/short, belt, socks, and blue neckerchief. They must bring their Scout Handbook and must be prepared for questions. If they are not prepared, the Scoutmaster will ask them to better prepare and return next week. There are two parts to rank advancement.

1. **Scoutmaster Conference (SMC)**: A scout must have a Scoutmaster Conference with the Scoutmaster prior to a BOR. This is a review of the rank requirements, and skill questions will be asked to verify mastery of the requirements. It is also a chance to talk with the scout about the scouting program, what the scout likes, what they would change, who their friends are, what leadership roles they think they would like to pursue, what their plans are for their next rank, etc. If a scout is not prepared, they will be asked to study the rank requirements and come back later.
2. **Board of Review (BOR)**: Once a scout completes their SMC, they are eligible for a BOR. A BOR is conducted by three non-Scoutmaster parents. It is a review of the requirements, and skill questions can be asked. It is also a review of the scout's experience with the troop. Parents are needed for Boards of Review. The troop requests that each scout's parents plan to attend two BORs throughout the year. A sign-up link is made available via email update.

**Court of Honor:**

As discussed above, a scout can advance at any time. They will usually be awarded newly earned rank patch at our closing circle after completing their BOR. Our Courts of Honor offer a chance for parents and guests to come and hear about what the troop has been doing. This is also an opportunity to celebrate recent rank advancement and for scouts to receive recognitions and patches for any merit badges earned. The COH's are typically held in October, March and June on Tuesday nights. Parents are asked to bring drinks and snacks for a reception following the COH.

**Girl Troop 58 2021-22 Advancement Team**

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